



# Naval Medical Research and Development

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## News Releases

### NAMRU-2 Establishes Regional Reference Laboratory in Cambodia

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From NAMRU-2 Public Affairs and CDR Gary Brice



Laboratory opening ceremony. From the left: CAPT. Vaughn, former Director of NAMRU-2; Army Maj. Gen. Todd McCaffrey, Deputy Commanding General of the U.S. Army Pacific Command; Dr. Prof. Yin Sinath, Director of Kampong Cham Provincial Hospital; H.E. Lun Lim Thai, Kampong Cham Provincial Governor; H.E. Dr. Mam Bunheng, Cambodia Minister of Health; William Heidt, U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia; Dr. Elizabeth George, Director of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program for DTRA; Dr. Kimsour Phirun, Director of Kampong Cham Provincial Health Department; Mr. Ly Sovith, Director of Kampong Cham Blood Transfusion Center; Mr. Um Kimseang, Kampong Cham Laboratory Stock Manager; Mrs. Nhem Somary, Kampong Cham Laboratory Manager; Mr. Timothy Stotish, Cooperative Biological Engagement Program (CBEP) country manager for Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Cambodia, and LCDR Jamal Dejli, Head of Laboratory Services.

CAMBODIA -- Located between the eastern banks of the Mekong River and adjacent to the Vietnamese border, Kampong Cham Province is the fourth largest province in Cambodia by population and a key supply corridor for Cambodia and neighboring countries. Since 2005, sporadic cases of H5N1 Avian Influenza have been detected in this region. The U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 2 (NAMRU-2), in collaboration with the National Institute of Public Health (NIPH), and the Provincial Health Department (PHD) in Kampong Cham, established longitudinal research and epidemiological surveillance studies in this province starting in 2006, which provided important public health information for the Ministry of Health.

NAMRU-2, with funding support provided by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), implemented capacity building renovations projects at the Kampong Cham provincial hospital, including establishing diagnostic testing protocols adapted for disease surveillance in Cambodia,

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[Naval Medical Research Unit San Antonio Hosts International Delegation to Foster Medical Research Collaborations](#)

[Military Medicine Promotes Global Health Security with Partner Nations in West Africa](#)

[Supporting the 21st Century Sailor with Science](#)

[NMRC Researchers Participate in National Museum of Health and Medicine STEM Initiative, Brain Awareness Week 2017](#)

[79th Medical Wing Commanding Officer Visits Naval Medical Research Center](#)

[The Rudder: Navy Medical Service Corps Selects NMRC Own as Navy Medicine's Aerospace Experimental Psychology Officer of the Year 2016](#)

[NAMRU-SA Researchers Developing Field Portable Sterilizer](#)

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[Turning the Table on Mosquitos –Navy Researchers Infect Mosquitos with Malaria to Mass Produce Critical Reagents](#)

bringing the hospital laboratory facility to operational standards, and providing training on public health principles in the areas of epidemiology, laboratory diagnostics, disease surveillance and outbreak response. Earlier in 2016, as a result of these efforts, the Kampong Cham hospital laboratory was established as the first regional reference laboratory outside the Cambodian Capital, Phnom Penh.

In August 2016, NAMRU-2 hosted an interagency meeting in Kampong Cham to coordinate surveillance activities with national stakeholders. This two-day workshop was attended by NIPH, Center for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control (CNM); the Cambodian Center for Disease Control (CCDC), and the provincial health departments of Kampong Cham and Tbong Khmum provinces.

During the workshop, data from NAMRU-2 Acute Febrile Illness (AFI) surveillance were reviewed and discussed.

“This study aims to determine the differences in the types of pathogens and the burden of respiratory and enteric diseases among residents from these two distinct geographical regions, in addition to Dengue and Chikungunya viruses as the main vector-borne targets” said Lt. Cmdr. Jamal Dejli, principal investigator of the AFI project.

The AFI surveillance study is funded by the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch and is a prospective surveillance study monitoring the burden of vector-borne, acute respiratory and diarrheal diseases among rural and peri-rural villages in Kampong Cham and Tbong Khmum Provinces.

“The workshop was a great success. This was the first interagency meeting to review and discuss our results and to prioritize activities in the future. Everyone in attendance agreed on the importance of the surveillance data gathered on the most prevalent diseases in Cambodia”, said Gary Brice, Director of NAMRU-2, Phnom Penh. In addition to Cambodia, NAMRU-2 developed and completed multiple field- and hospital-based studies for a variety of infectious diseases of military importance across Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, Malaysia, Laos, and Singapore.

[NMRC Deputy Director for Infectious Diseases Presents on Medical Research in the U.S. Navy at Alma Mater](#)

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